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VOL. II.

APRIL, 1825.

No. 4.

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SERMON.

JOHN, XXI. 17.—*And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.*

The third time that Christ appeared to his disciples after his crucifixion, he dined with them; and after they had dined and were sitting together in free and familiar conversation, Christ turned to Peter and addressed him in this free and affectionate manner: "Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith unto him again the second time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, lovest thou me. And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." Peter plainly perceived by Christ's putting the

question the third time, that he had reference to his denying him thrice, which cut him to the heart. It is now natural to inquire, how Peter could sincerely make such a solemn profession of love to Christ? Christ repeatedly asked him whether he loved him, and Peter as often replied, without hesitation or reserve, in the affirmative, and appealed to him as the Searcher of hearts, for the truth of his declaration—"Yea, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." It seems, that Peter must have had some solid foundation, upon which to make such a solemn profession of supreme love to Christ, whom he had so lately forsaken and profanely denied before his mortal enemies. He had given great occasion not only to Christ, but to his fellow disciples, to call his sincerity in question. He had been almost as guilty in *denying* Christ, as Judas had been in *betraying* him. How then could he obtain clear and satisfactory evidence to himself that he loved Christ sincerely and supremely?

To answer this question is the main design of the present discourse. Here then I would observe,

I. Peter had true love to Christ.

When he called him to be his disciple, he instantaneously and cheerfully obeyed his call. And while he attended Christ in the course of his ministry, he frequently expressed a supreme love to him. When some of Christ's nominal disciples disapproved his doctrines and forsook him, Peter remained firm and unshaken in his attachments to his person and doctrines. It is said, "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?—Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.—And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ the Son of the living God." By this profession, Peter manifested his sincere love to Christ, and his firm trust and confidence in him as the only and all-sufficient Savior. And so he did on another occasion, when Christ questioned his disciples respecting their faith. "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say, that I the Son of man, am? And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist; some say Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And

Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." Here Christ not only approves of Peter's faith in speculation, but represents it as flowing from a special divine illumination, which stamps his character as a true believer. And this appears to have been his real character, from another declaration of his, connected with Christ's promise to him. When the disciples heard the remark which Christ made upon the rich young man, who had left him sorrowful, "they were exceedingly amazed, saying Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible. Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the *regeneration*, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Thus Christ repeatedly pronounced Peter to be a friend to truth and an heir of glory, which puts it beyond doubt, that he loved him supremely. Besides, Christ treated Peter with peculiar respect.—Whenever he selected any of his



disciples to attend him on particular occasions, Peter was always one of the number. Peter, James and John attended him on the mount of transfiguration, and in his agonies in the garden. Christ loved Peter and Peter loved Christ, with a sincere and ardent affection. He was willing to part with all things for Christ, and even to lay down his life for him. This he manifested at the trying time, when his enemies came to apprehend him. He smote off the ear of the high priest's servant; and had not Christ restrained him, he would undoubtedly have persisted in his defence, until he had either dispersed his enemies, or fallen by their hands. Thus it appears that Peter did really love Christ sincerely and supremely. This leads me to observe,

II. That Peter's love to Christ was essentially different from all the selfish affections of his heart. True love to Christ is disinterested and supreme, and consequently distinct from, and opposite to, every unholy and selfish exercise of the true believer. This Christ taught at different times and in different forms. He said, "no man can serve God and Mammon." "He said no man can be his disciple, unless he loves him more than father or mother, brother or sister wife or children, houses or lands, or even his own life." And he applied this doctrine practically. When a very amiable young man came to him, to know what he must do to inherit eternal life, he

taught him to exercise *pure disinterested* love. Such an affection as this is entirely different from any unholy, selfish affection. Peter's supreme love to Christ was totally distinct and different from any unholy, selfish affection. By nature he was like all other men by nature, totally depraved and under the entire dominion of selfishness. Whenever it was that he became a friend to Christ, his affections were changed from what they were in the state of nature.—His gracious affections never harmonized with his sinful ones, but created a sensible warfare in his own breast, by which he could distinguish them from each other. The moral discernment which he had as a moral agent, enabled him to perceive the moral difference between his sincere and supreme love to Christ, and all the other exercises of his mind. When Christ was in view, and his mind was fixed on his person and character, he could sensibly feel those affections towards him, which he never felt towards any other person or object. When he was conversing with him, he could enjoy a pleasure and satisfaction, which was different from, and superior to, all other enjoyments. He could sensibly prefer him before all created objects. He could feel a willingness to deny himself of any thing and every thing, to promote his cause and interest in the world. He could be conscious that he was willing to die with him, or for him. In a word, se-

often as he loved Christ supremely he could distinguish his love to him from all other feelings and exercises of his heart. On supposition, that he did actually love Christ supremely, we may easily conceive of his plainly distinguishing his holy, from his unholy affections. When many of Christ's disciples went back and followed him no more, and when he put the trying question to the twelve, "Will ye also go away?" Then Peter's love to him was put to the severest test, and found sincere. "Simon Peter then answered, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.— And we believe, and are sure, that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God." At that time Peter could, and undoubtedly did, distinguish his love to Christ from every unholy, selfish affection that had ever existed in his heart. And therefore,

III. When he had distinguished his supreme love to Christ from all his sinful affections, he knew that his sinful affections did not prove that he had not the true love of Christ in him. Our savior never taught, that none could love him sincerely and supremely, unless they were absolutely free from all the remains of moral corruption. Nor is it a doctrine of the gospel that sinful affections are a conclusive evidence, that a person never loved Christ in sincerity. Though Peter found, by unhappy experience, that he was far from being free from the bondage of sin, and

had frequently offended his Savior, yet he knew, that this did not prove he had never given him the supreme place in his heart.— He knew, that Christ had repeatedly reproved him, and especially by his *significant look*, after he had denied him thrice. But yet he was conscious, that notwithstanding all his remaining, moral imperfection, Christ was the supreme object of his affection. Hence he knew that his moral imperfection did not destroy the evidence of his being a sincere friend to Christ. If the least moral imperfection could destroy the hope of a saint, it would be difficult to find a real saint in the Bible. For the best of men, whose characters are there recorded, manifested and lamented their moral imperfection and the native contrariety of their hearts to God. Paul says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And the apostle John says in the name of all christians, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Peter, as well as Paul, had a right to consider himself a sincere friend and follower of Christ, notwithstanding his moral imperfection. Besides,

IV. Peter's supreme love to Christ was a positive evidence of his being his real friend, and destroyed all other evidence against it. Sinful affections are an evidence of men's being enemies to Christ. And under certain circumstances they are an infalli-



ble evidence of it. Thus the sinful affections of all unrenowned persons are infallible evidence, that they love not the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. And indeed sinful affections are always an evidence, that men are in the state of nature; unless this evidence is destroyed by the opposite evidence of supreme love to Christ. But whenever supreme love to Christ takes place in the heart, *and is discovered*; then it totally destroys the evidence of a graceless state, arising from sinful exercises. According to scripture, one exercise of real holiness or supreme love to Christ, constitutes a real saint. And when any person is conscious, that he has such a holy affection, he has the witness in himself, that he has the spirit of Christ and is one of his. This evidence Peter had in his favor. He had loved Christ supremely and knew that he had loved him supremely; of course, he knew that Christ knew that he was his real friend. On this ground he could humbly and confidently say, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." It is very likely that Peter was in the most sensible exercise of sincere love to Christ, when he put and repeated the question, "Simon son of Jonas lovest thou me?" For he was sitting with Christ and his disciples while they were freely and pleasingly conversing about the great and glorious things of Christ's kingdom. Peter had oft-

en reflected upon his ingratitude and baseness in denying Christ. He had wept bitterly for it. And the more he saw and conversed with Christ, the more tender, humble, and affectionate he felt towards him. We may, therefore, naturally suppose, that he answered his question from the fulness of his heart, and an immediate consciousness of a supreme love to his person and cause. And on this ground, he had a right to make the solemn profession in the text; for such sensible exercises of supreme love to Christ, totally destroyed the evidence of his being a hypocrite or false professor, arising from his forsaking and denying him. In the actual and sensible exercises of supreme love to Christ, he could, with propriety and confidence, appeal to Christ and say, "Lord thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."

This subject now suggests several useful reflections.

I. It appears from the character and conduct of Peter, that all real christians may have satisfactory evidence that they are so. Peter was a real christian, for he loved Christ sincerely and supremely, and he knew that he loved him so, which gave him satisfactory evidence of his being in the state of grace and favor with Christ. Peter had not already attained, neither was he already perfect; but with all his moral imperfections, he knew that he was a subject of grace

and real friend to his Saviour. He knew, that he loved him, not from mercenary, but from pure, disinterested motives. He knew that he had been selfish and like the other disciples had wished to know who should be greatest in the kingdom of Christ; but he could distinguish such selfish feelings from his pure, supreme love of Christ. His selfish affections were a foil to discover and distinguish the nature of his pure, holy, disinterested affections, and instead of being an evidence against his sincerity, were an evidence in favor of it. Now, if Peter, notwithstanding all his moral imperfections, could have satisfactory evidence of being a real christian, then all other real christians may have satisfactory evidence that they are such. They, like Peter, do in reality love Christ supremely, and may know, as he did, that they do love Christ supremely, and of course, may know that they are his real friends. Peter had moral imperfections and great moral imperfections, but he could and did distinguish his holy, from his unholy affections. And every real christian, as well as Peter, may distinguish his holy, from his unholy affections, and thereby gain satisfactory evidence, that he is a real friend to Christ and entitled to eternal life, notwithstanding all his moral imperfections. All real christians are imperfect in this life, and if they could not distinguish their holy, from their unholy affections, it would be im-

possible for them, to have clear, satisfactory evidence of their gracious state as long as they live in this world. Grace is an infallible evidence of grace, and all real christians have this infallible evidence in their favor, whether they know it or not. There are, undoubtedly, many real christians, who have this evidence in their favor, that are involved in darkness and doubts, whether they have received the grace of God in truth; but they have the infallible evidence of grace in their own hearts, and might discover it, notwithstanding all their moral defects and short comings in duty. Though they may have greater moral imperfections than Peter, or Paul had; yet they have the witness in their hearts that they love Christ supremely, which counterbalances and sets aside all evidence to the contrary. If they would only examine their hearts critically and impartially, they might discover and distinguish their holy affections from all unholy ones, and gain satisfactory evidence that they have been born of God and are the children of grace.

2. If Peter could have clear, satisfactory evidence, that he was a real christian; then sinners must have clear and convincing evidence, that they are not christians. Peter knew that he was a sinner, before he became a christian. He knew, that he loved himself solely and supremely, which was a violation of the first



and great commandment of the law, which he had often read, and which required him to love God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength. But after he became a christian, he knew that he loved Christ supremely, and was a christian. While he was a sinner, he had a conscience or moral sense, which constrained him to distinguish wrong from right, and selfishness from benevolence; and all sinners have the same faculty of distinguishing the nature of their moral exercises. "Every imagination of the thoughts of their heart is evil and only evil continually." Every one of their moral exercises is altogether selfish and sinful, for which their consciences condemn them. This is an infallible evidence, that they are the enemies, and not the friends, of God. Some sinners do think they are christians. Those who loved Christ for the loaves and followed him awhile, thought that they were his real friends; but they were entirely deceived. Some moral, regular, amiable sinners now think they are christians, but they are deceiving themselves. They have not the least evidence that they love Christ supremely, for all their moral exercises are entirely selfish and criminal.—They might know, that they love themselves and the world supremely, if they would only look into their hearts and critically compare all their moral exercises with the law of love. Paul might

have certainly known that he was a sinner, while he thought he was doing God service. He was then a real enemy to Christ, to his cause, and to his friends. This he had complete evidence of, but he would not see it. This is true of all sinners, without a single exception. Their hearts are evil, and full of evil, without a single exercise of pure, disinterested love, and therefore they might know that they are enemies to God and all righteousness.

3. It appears from the case of Peter, that none ought to remain in a state of uncertainty, as to their spiritual state. All know, that they are either saints, or sinners. If they are saints, they may have satisfactory evidence, that they are subjects of grace; and if they are sinners, they may have as satisfactory evidence, that they are totally destitute of grace. It is not a matter of indifference, whether they are saints, or sinners; nor is it a matter of indifference, whether they know that they are saints, or that they are sinners. A state of uncertainty is not only an unhappy, but a sinful and dangerous state. As all may know what their spiritual state is, so it must be owing to a sinful neglect of duty in all, who remain in a state of uncertainty. So long as they continue in such a state, they can neither read the Bible, nor hear the Gospel preached, with propriety or profit. Doubting saints are in danger of applying the threatenings in the gospel

to themselves; and doubting sinners are in danger of applying the promises of the gospel to themselves. Doubting saints are in danger of delaying to profess Christ before men, and doubting sinners are in greater danger of making a false profession. The remaining depravity of saints, and the total depravity of sinners, lead both to take the same method, to keep themselves in the state of uncertainty. They both run into and lose themselves in the wide field of possibility. The doubting saint says to himself, I think I sometimes love Christ sincerely and supremely; but I may be mistaken. It appears from the bible, that a great many have thought that they loved Christ sincerely and supremely, but they deceived themselves, for they had not the love of Christ in them; and it is possible, that I may deceive myself in the same manner. The doubting sinner says to himself, I think I love Christ sincerely and supremely sometimes, though I have much evidence to the contrary. But many good men have said they had doubts and fears about their gracious state; and therefore, it is possible, that I may be a good man, though I have doubts and fears. This mode of reasoning in both saints and sinners, tends to keep them in doubt and uncertainty as long as they live. The saint may always ask himself, Am I not a self-deceived sinner? And the sinner may always ask himself, Am I not a self-

deceived or doubting saint? This mode of thinking and reasoning looks plausible; but it is a mere delusion of the great deceiver?—No man has a right to ask himself whether it be not possible, that he should be deceived *about what he knows*. No man has a right to ask himself, when he *knows* he sees the sun in a clear day, whether he is not deceived. It is impossible, that a man should be deceived about what he *knows*. When a saint has supreme love to Christ and *knows* it, he cannot be deceived; and when a sinner has a heart full of evil, and *knows* it, he cannot be deceived. Saints ought to judge of their own character, by what they know passes in their own hearts; and sinners ought to judge of their own character, by what passes in their own hearts. The scripture takes it for granted, that saints may know their own hearts, and that sinners may know their own hearts, and accordingly requires all men to know whether they are saints, or sinners, and forbids them to remain in uncertainty, as to their spiritual state. Paul says to christians, "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove yourselves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates." Peter says, "Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure." Peter knew, that christians could know their own hearts, for he knew his own heart, and he also knew that he loved Christ



supremely. He knew, that christians have no right, nor occasion, to live in uncertainty, as to their spiritual state. It is not a duty, but a sin, for any to doubt, whether they are saints or sinners, for they may come, and ought to come to a certainty upon this most interesting subject. It is to be feared, that there are not a few doubting saints, and doubting sinners in this place, who seriously think, that they are doing their duty, by doubting. But if they would do their duty, what occasion would they have for doubting? Let them love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and they could have no more occasion for doubting than Peter had, and he had none. This subject calls upon doubting christians, to put away their doubts, and come to the table of Christ, and it as loudly calls upon doubting sinners to put away their doubts, by immediate repentance, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him. If your souls be infinitely precious, secure their salvation. If delays be dangerous, beware of delaying. If some of you delay much longer, your delay must be fatal. But this subject more particularly calls upon the professors of religion, to search and try the state of their minds, previously to their coming to the communion table, where Christ will be invisibly present; and though he may not by an audible voice put the question to

any individual, which he put to Peter "Lovest thou me?" yet he will as critically watch the heart of every one, as he watched the heart of Peter. The question now is, are you as willing that Christ should know your hearts, as Peter was that he should know his? If you are, it will be but a small thing to be judged by man's judgment, if you can sincerely appeal to Christ, and say, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." If you know that you love Christ, you may know that Christ loves you. And if you have once loved Christ, you may know that he will always love you, though like Peter's your love and faith may sometimes fail. Be entreated then to keep the feast, not with old leaven of mercenary love, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

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DIVINE EFFICIENCY.

The doctrine of divine agency as exerted upon the hearts of sinners in regeneration, and upon the hearts of saints in all their holy exercises is so plainly taught, and so fully believed that nothing need be said in support of it. But another view of the doctrine, very nearly connected with this, as it respects the great end of both, which is the glory of God, meets with much opposition. I mean the doctrine of Divine agency exerted upon the hearts of wicked

men. It is said that it tarnishes the character of the Deity, which should ever be kept pure and spotless; that it infringes the liberty of the sinful agent; and that it destroys the use of means to reclaim the impenitent.

I shall not attempt to prove that God does operate upon the minds of the wicked. I think the Bible has made this sufficiently evident. But I wish candidly to state some of the reasons which I have, for not receiving the objections which are made to this doctrine.

Obj. 1. It makes God a sinner. I do not receive this objection as valid, because I believe that God may have a good end in view, in the same wicked conduct, in which men have a bad end in view. I believe that this was the case when Joseph's brethren sold him into Egypt. They meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. This was the case when Pharaoh held the children of Israel in bondage in opposition to the Divine command, God caused him to conduct so, that his great name might be declared throughout all the earth. But he had a very different end in view. In these instances I do not see that any thing took place strange in the Divine conduct. Doubtless God pursues, substantially, the same conduct in respect to all the actions of wicked men. And it is enough, forever to free the Deity from the imputation of guilt, if he performs all his actions for a good end. What

more than this could benevolence desire? And with what less could it be satisfied?

Obj. 2. The doctrine infringes the liberty of the agent. I understand this objection to be, that if God causes a being to act, that being cannot act freely. I believe that God causes us to be free. In order that the objection should stand, it ought to be shown that God cannot cause a being to be free.—For if the objector admits that it is possible that God can cause a being to be free; he admits that possibly, the objection has no foundation. Why is not this brought as an objection to the freedom of the *christian*? Those very persons who say that positive Divine efficiency destroys the liberty of the sinner, acknowledge that the saint acts under a positive Divine agency; and yet, that he acts freely. Now, is it any more difficult for God, by his agency, to cause a sinner to act freely, than it is for him to cause a saint to act freely? Is it any more difficult for us to conceive of freedom in the one case, than in the other? If not, why bring the objection, that it destroys freedom in one case, when it is acknowledged that it is not destroyed in the other?

Obj. 3. It destroys the use of means. And why does it not destroy the use of means when applied to the *christian*? I ask the objector to show, if he can, why means are not as important, when applied to the impenitent sinner;



on the supposition that God is the efficient cause of all his exercises, as they are when applied to the christian, on the supposition that God is the cause of all his holy exercises? To be consistent, the objector must deny the use of means in both cases, or hold to them in both.

I will conclude with a word on the manner in which those who make the foregoing objections, interpret a certain part of scripture. They think those texts which assert positive Divine efficiency in the case of wicked men, need to be modified. "God hardened Pharaoh's heart." This is said to be similar to the passage, "Solomon built the temple." The idea, fully expressed, is this; as Solomon built the temple by employing others to do the work, so God hardened Pharaoh's heart by employing others to do it. In my view, this is as much as to say, if it is proper to ascribe to one *man* what another *man* does, then it is proper to ascribe to *God* what *man* does. I know of no rules, either of logic or of interpretation, which allow of such licence. Other men possess the same powers and capacities to labor which Solomon possessed. But between the Creator and a frail creature, there is no such similarity. This explanation is taking such liberty with the scripture as would not be allowed to be taken with any profane author. And when an opinion must be supported by

such reasoning, I strongly suspect that opinion to be false.

ORANGE.

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REVIEW OF MR. POND'S CONCERT LECTURES.

*Short Missionary Discourses, or Monthly Concert Lectures. By Enoch Pond, A. M. Pastor of the Church in Ward, Mass.*

Most of these Lectures, it appears, were originally designed for the edification and improvement of "that little band of christian friends, who usually assemble with the author at the Monthly Concert of Prayer." One object of their publication is, "to render this important season more interesting and profitable" to the churches generally which are in the practice of observing it, especially when they are deprived of the assistance of Clergymen, and when, although Clergymen may be present, nothing new, or of special interest, occurs to diversify the meeting. But the ultimate object of the work is the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom, by exciting among the churches a deeper interest, and more vigorous exertion in the cause of Missions. Such an object is certainly worthy of the talents and exertion of the respectable author. Although much has been done, and much is now doing in various ways, to increase and direct the zeal of christians in the dissemination of the

gospel; yet so important is this object, and so much remains still to be done, that every new and well directed effort to accomplish it, is a just cause of gratitude and joy to the friends of the Redeemer. When we consider the millions that are now enveloped in pagan darkness, the foolish and cruel superstitions which hold the empire of their minds, and the fact that the gospel is the divinely appointed means of their present improvement and future salvation, the cause of missions presents itself in an attitude of importance, which no language can fully describe. That man, who, in view of the present state of the heathen, does not feel the importance of missionary exertion, certainly does not himself know the divine excellence of the gospel. He surely must be a stranger to the religion of Christ, who does not desire that its saving efficacy may be known by all the children of men. An attempt to spread the gospel abroad in the earth, is one of the most rational, dignified, and God-like enterprises, in which a creature was ever engaged. From this, including in it all necessary exertion to water the seed of the divine word wherever it has already been sown, a higher degree of intellectual and moral improvement, and a better preparation for the present and future happiness of mankind may be expected, than from any, yea, than from all other means. We do, therefore, highly appreciate the efforts of those who

attempt to enlighten the christian public in regard to this important duty. It is not, we are persuaded, yet duly considered. Many of those who are favored with the gospel are strangely unmindful of its value, and regardless of the wretched condition of others who are deprived of its light. There are those who attempt to *pray* for the conversion and salvation of the heathen, who it is to be feared, are not only heartless and faithless in their prayers, but unmindful of the important duties which are necessarily *implied* in an acceptable prayer for them. The christian public need to have their attention *often* drawn to the subject of missions, their obligation to aid them frequently enforced, and all the encouragement to engagedness in this good work which can be derived from the promises of God, and the example and success of his faithful servants both in ancient and modern times, kept constantly before them. It is peculiarly desirable that those who statedly assemble for the purpose of offering their united prayers for the salvation of the heathen, and for the general enlargement and prosperity of Zion, should have understandings well informed in regard to the object of their solicitude, and hearts warmly engaged for the attainment of it. The object of our author, both in delivering and publishing his Concert Lectures, is therefore a great and a good object.

But we are aware that the most

important question with our readers in regard to these lectures is, whether they are written in a manner suited to the accomplishment of the important object of their author? This question we shall endeavor to answer to their satisfaction, by presenting them with a brief outline of the subjects which are here discussed, and giving them some information with respect to the manner in which they are treated.

In the first discourse, Mr. Pond endeavours to shew that "the work of Missions is a divine institution." In the second, that "Paul was a Missionary to the heathen." In the third, he describes "the labors of Paul." In the fourth, he attempts to show the "comparative advantages and disadvantages of the primitive christians, and christians now for spreading the gospel." In the fifth, he shows that "the work of promoting the gospel is a privilege to the church." The sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth are upon the subject of prayer. The sixth, "on the power of prayer," the seventh, "on encouragements to prayer," the eighth, "on perseverance in prayer," the ninth, "on what is implied in prayer for the success of the gospel." The tenth discourse is entitled, "our indebtedness to Missions a reason for supporting them. The eleventh, "the cruelties of the heathen." The twelfth, "the advantages of attending to Missionary intelligence." The thirteenth,

"the prosperity of the church essential to the success of Missions." In the fourteenth, "evil surmises" in respect to Missions are exposed and refuted. In the fifteenth, it is shown that "the way to be rich is to be liberal." In the sixteenth, "the obligation of christians in relation to the Jews," is considered. The seventeenth is on "idolatry among christians." The eighteenth, "on the future state of the heathen." The nineteenth, "on the aggravated guilt of sinning against light." The last, "on the Millennium."

We think this is a judicious selection of subjects. It is not in our power readily to call to mind a series of subjects, the discussion of which would be better suited to answer the important objects of the author than those which are here selected. It must be obvious to our readers, that in the discussion of these, he has the fairest opportunity to urge upon christians their *obligation* to aid the work of missions. They bring within his reach the commands of God on this subject, the example of his ancient servants the Apostles, the crimes and sufferings of the heathen, and the debt of gratitude which is due for the peculiar blessings now enjoyed through the labors of missionaries.

These subjects also give the author an excellent opportunity to meet the *objections* which are made to the work of missions, especially such as these, "that the condition of the heathen would



not be improved by the introduction of christianity among them." "That they can be saved without the gospel;" "that the expense of missions is too great to be borne by the christian community;" that it is uncertain to what object the funds contributed for missionary purposes are appropriated;" and "that God will accomplish his own work in his own time."

From these subjects too, it is easy to be seen, would naturally be drawn some of the most important *encouragements* to engagedness and perseverance in the work of missions. Such for instance, as the success which has attended this work in the hands of Paul and his brethren, the privilege of being co-workers with God, the prospect of saving some of our race from present and future misery, and the blessedness of being found faithful in the service of God.

Upon these subjects, especially upon those of them which relate to prayer, every thing may be said which is necessary to enlighten christians in regard to the nature of this duty; to quicken and animate them in the performance of it, and to show them its intimate connection with numerous other important duties which they are prone to neglect.

But it will be expected that we say something respecting the manner in which these pertinent and very important subjects are discussed. And we have no hesitation in saying, in general terms,

that they are discussed in a manner which does great credit to the author's intellect and heart; and which cannot, we think, but do an important service to the cause which they were intended to promote.

To the *truth*, as well as to the importance of most of the sentiments advanced in these lectures, we readily give our assent. There is, however, in our opinion, room in one or two instances, to question the correctness of the author's views, or at least, the language in which they are expressed. In his first lecture, he attempts to show that "the work of missions is a divine institution," in distinction from the pastoral office. Now, although we cannot dispute that the work of missions is "an external service enjoined in the scripture; a service which could not have been so clearly discovered, if indeed it could have been discovered at all, had it not been thus enjoined;" yet we do question the propriety of speaking of it as a distinct institution from the pastoral work. The *ministry* is a divine institution, which includes both the pastoral work and the work of missions. The work of missions is one part of the ministerial office, and the pastoral work another.—We should make the same objection to the calling of the pastoral work a divine institution, in distinction from the work of missions, as we do to the calling of the work of missions a divine in

stitution, in distinction from the pastoral work. The reason why we do not think it proper to speak of these as distinct institutions, is, they are not sufficiently distinct in their natures. The work in both cases, is essentially the same. The missionary preaches the gospel to whom he is sent, as the pastor preaches it to those with whom he resides. The missionary administers the ordinances to believers, whether they are those whom he has been instrumental of converting, or those who were believers previously to his coming among them, in the same manner as the pastor administers the ordinances to the believers among whom he is settled, or who, by his instrumentality, are gathered into a church. In short, the difference between a missionary and a stated pastor, is circumstantial merely. A missionary may be a pastor, or a pastor a missionary, by a slight alteration in their circumstances. Indeed, the missionary is a pastor for the time being, whenever he resides with a church and administers to them the ordinances of the gospel. And the stated pastor, in the instruction of many of his flock, has frequently to do substantially the same work, which is considered the most appropriate to the character of a missionary.

But all we have here said, does not in the least weaken the force of Mr. Pond's reasoning to show that the work of missions is a *duty*

which God has enjoined. Although we do not consider it a divine institution, in distinction from the pastoral office, yet we believe it to be a part of the work of the *ministry*, which is undoubtedly a divine institution. And the command of Christ, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature," teaches the duty of missions as clearly as though this were an institution distinct from every other.

We have read with much pleasure the discourse entitled, "The way to be rich is to be liberal." But we cannot help thinking that this title implies too much. Lord Kaimes would not entitle his work on Criticism, "*The Elements of Criticism*," but "*Elements of Criticism*;" because he was aware that there were important principles relative to the subject of criticism, which he had not included in his work. Now we think that Mr. Pond had at least as much reason to avoid the use of the definite article in the title of this discourse, as Lord Kaimes had in the title of *his* work. It might, with as much propriety, be said that the way to be rich is to be *honest*; the way to be rich is to be *industrious*; or the way to be rich is "to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," as that "the way to be rich is to be liberal." The plain truth upon this subject appears to be this: true liberality is *one* of those virtues, to which God has promised a temporal reward, and consequently

mankind, so far from fearing that they shall impoverish themselves by giving away their property when duty requires the sacrifice, may expect that this will be a means of increasing it. We will not say there are no *more* promises that liberality shall be rewarded, than there are that such virtues as industry, honesty, and the sanctification of the Sabbath, shall be ; but we *do* say that temporal blessings are as *really* promised to these virtues as to liberality. Mr. Pond perhaps considered himself justified in saying "*the way to be rich is to be liberal,*" because he was careful to show that liberality *implies* these other virtues. It is, however, a question with us, whether upon the same principle on which he has made liberality imply those other virtues, he might not make some one or all of these imply liberality. He seems to suppose, that a truly liberal man will be industrious, and honest, and frugal, and temperate, and prayerful, because he is a truly *virtuous* or *good* man. The truth of this inference we cannot deny. But, we deem it of importance to say, that it might with equal propriety be inferred, that a truly *honest* man would for the same reason be *liberal*. We cannot, therefore, see any thing in the *manner*, in which the author has discussed the subject under consideration, more than in the subject itself, to justify the title which he has given it. Had the title been *Wealth increased by Liberali-*

*ty, or Liberality a means of increasing Wealth,* instead of "*The way to be rich is to be liberal,*" we think the impression upon his readers would have been more happy, and the truths suggested in this excellent discourse more likely to produce the effect desired. We cannot suppose that Mr. Pond, by the language, which he has used on this subject, really intended any thing more, than that true liberality is a means of increasing wealth. His arguments certainly prove no more than this. This appears to us to be the truth which his text most obviously suggests, and which, notwithstanding the error of expression which we have noticed, he has ably and strikingly illustrated. This is a truth which demands the serious attention and practical regard of all his readers ; and from which we hope their attention will not be diverted by any criticisms of ours. We should regret having made the preceding remarks upon the title of this discourse, if they should excite the prejudice of any of our readers against the discourse itself, or prevent their perusing it with the same attention and self-application, as though nothing had been said respecting it.

We cannot, without increasing this review to the bulk of the volume before us, give our readers an *example* of the manner, in which all these subjects are discussed. They shall, however, be gratified with a few specimens.—



We here present them with a practical reflection upon the view which he had taken of the labors of Paul. We make this selection, not only for purpose of letting our readers see how the author writes, but with a view to inculcate a practical lesson which we think worthy of the attention and remembrance of all.

"We may learn what that is which each of us *most needs*, in order to our becoming extensively useful. It is not, in ordinary cases more health, or more strength, or greater natural faculties for doing good. It is rather this, a heart to do good. We need the spirit and the heart of Paul. We need his disinterestedness, his diligence, his prudence, his faithfulness.— We need his unconquerable ardor, his burning zeal, his humble dependance, and untiring perseverance in the cause and service of his Lord. Did these several traits belong to us, to the degree in which they belonged to him; we should not need our natural capacities enlarged, or our stations in life materially altered, in order to our becoming extensively useful.— With *hearts* to do good, either to the bodies or the souls of men, with strong *desires* to be useful, in promoting and extending the Redeemer's kingdom; opportunities for gratifying these desires would not long be wanting. And with the promised blessing of heaven on our side, we might expect every labor of benevolence, in which we engaged, would be

followed, and crowned with desirable success."

The following observations upon the subject of prayer for the universal spread of the gospel, although they fully evince the hypocrisy of many a religious professor, must be considered as both just and important.

"It is implied in fervent prayer for the universal spread of the religion of Christ, that we are disposed to do all we can, by our influence, our personal labors, and our property to promote this religion. Prayer is an expression of our desires, and fervent prayer of our earnest desires that this holy religion might be promoted and fill the earth. But if we earnestly desire such an event, shall we not, be willing to *do* what in us lies to accomplish it? And if we manifest an unwillingness to do as much as this, who will give us credit for the earnestness or the sincerity of our desires? Who will believe that our prayers on the subject are not heartless and insincere? Will not the sick person, who prays for the restoration of health, be disposed to use all necessary means that his health may be restored? Will not the pious parent, who prays for the conversion of his children, be disposed to do whatever he is able, that they may be converted and saved? And will it not hold universally true, that any object, for which we can sincerely and earnestly pray, we shall be disposed and engaged, so far as in us lies, to accomplish? How plain-

ly, therefore, is it implied in prayer for the universal diffusion of the gospel which we all believe ourselves under obligations to offer, that we also consider ourselves engaged and pledged to *do whatever we consistently can, by our influence with others, and by our personal labours and sacrifices to spread the gospel of salvation throughout the earth.*"

We should be glad to present before our readers the whole of the discourse entitled, "Our indebtedness to missions a reason for supporting them." But, in this place, we can make only one short extract. After having shown, from various authentic histories, that "the inhabitants of Britain and the adjacent countries, from whom we claim to be descended, were once a cruel and ferocious race of Pagans"—"who were in the frequent, if not constant practice of offering human sacrifices," he asks,

"Do we shudder, my brethren and friends, in view of the abominations and cruelties which have been here described? Let us bear in mind then who were their authors, and to whom they belonged. It was not to a stranger, but to our *natural ancestors—the fathers and mothers* from whom we are lineally descended. Yes, my friends, in tracing back our genealogy but a few centuries, we arrive at the very scenes which have been described, and may behold our progenitors partakers in them! We may behold our own

father lifting the bloody knife, and plunging it into the heart of his victims; or sinking perhaps himself beneath the stroke of a Druidical priest! We may behold him kindling a fire which is to consume a trembling prisoner to ashes; or himself confined in the "wicker cage," involved in smoke, and flames, and death!! Who, my brethren, extinguished these awful fires? What angel of mercy cut down these unhallowed groves, overturned the bloody altar, and put an end to these horrid, superstitious rites? What rescued our fathers, and through them saved us, from terrors and woes such as have been described? It was, my brethren, the *Bible*, the *Gospel*. It was the benign and saving influence of the christian religion."

There is considerable variety in the *style* of our author. Its general characteristic is plainness. It is never dry—frequently neat, and sometimes elegant. But whether it comprises more or less of ornament, it is always concise and perspicuous. There is, as is generally the case, where there is so much conciseness united with perspicuity, a good degree of *energy* in the author's style. But there is not a more prominent and striking trait in the composition of his Concert Lectures, than an easy introduction of pertinent texts of scripture. He is not indeed very copious in his quotations; but the texts which he does select, as well as the allusions which he makes

to others, are for the most part, singularly appropriate. The reader may see the truth of these remarks illustrated in the following passage, in which he attempts to prove, that Paul frequently received charitable aid from individuals and churches in his day, in a manner similar to that in which missionaries abroad now receive a support from individuals and churches at home.

"The house of Onesiphorus sought him out very diligently," while he was a prisoner at Rome, "and oft refreshed him, and were not ashamed of his chain." In "many things also *they ministered unto him*," during his abode at Ephesus. While he was laboring at Corinth, he received contributions from other churches for his support. "I robbed other churches," he says to the Corinthians, "*taking of them wages* to do you service. These were probably the churches of Macedonia; for he immediately adds, "That which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied." The brethren at Philippi were very liberal, in contributing to the support of the great missionary Paul; and in his Epistle to them he commends them for it. "Ye have done well, that ye did communicate with mine afflictions; for even in Thessalonica, ye sent once and again unto my necessity. But I have all and abound, having received of Epaphroditus

the things which were sent unto me."

We do not think it too much to say, that there are passages in these lectures, which are specimens of genuine eloquence. Be this as it may, there are those which, we presume, were never heard without effect, and which will never be read without pleasure. Such, we think, is the following paragraph introduced for the purpose of enforcing one of the duties which devolve on us in consequence of what was done for our heathen ancestors.

"It becomes us to adore the sovereign grace of God, as manifested in the circumstances of our existence. Why was our lot cast in this favored period of the world and in this highly favored portion of it? Why were we not doomed to an age of bondage and darkness, an age of Druidical superstition and cruelty? Why were we not left to worship the oaks of our forest, or the work of our hands, and to the forlorn hope of appeasing by human sacrifices the dreaded wrath of imaginary gods? Why were we not consigned, with others who have lived before us, to a state of barbarism, without Bibles, without ordinances, destitute alike of rational enjoyments in this world, and a hope of glory beyond the grave? Are we better than our fathers? Who then hath made us to differ from them? And why are we thus highly and



happily distinguished? We can solve questions like these, my brethren, only by referring them to the sovereign pleasure and sovereign grace of God. It hath pleased him to distinguish us from all the generations which have been before us, by loading us with greater mercies, and putting into our hands a richer price to get wisdom."

Not less beautiful or affecting is the following passage, in which the author shows from the view which he had taken of the cruel rites of our heathen ancestors that "we ought very highly to value the gospel."

"Compare Old England, or New, at the present time, with what they were previous to their being visited with the light of the gospel; and how great, how happy the change! Instead of unmeaning ceremonies, and barbarous, murderous rites; the God of heaven is worshipped in the way of his own appointment; the consolations of the gospel are felt; and its Divine Institutions are known and observed. Instead of terror and bondage in this life, despair in death, and darkness and wretchedness beyond the tomb; the pleasure of the infinite Creator is revealed and understood, and by all who truly seek him, his love and favor are enjoyed. Learning too has taken the place of ignorance; wealth of poverty; social refinement of barbarian rudeness; rational liberty of lawless domination; and, in short, all the

charities and joys of christian society, of the multiform horrors of untutored heathenism. The change which has been produced is so obvious and great, that its reality cannot for a moment be questioned. But what, my friends, has done it? To what, as a leading cause may this change be traced? I hazard nothing in asserting that it is the *Gospel*."

Although the author frequently expresses himself, with the propriety and elegance which appear in these quotations; yet there are instances in which, for the want of due attention we presume, he uses language that is in some respects faulty. As we doubt not this review will meet his eye, and as we hope and expect he will have occasion to give the public a second edition of his work, we will take the liberty here to name a few expressions which we think might be advantageously altered.

On the thirty-seventh page the following sentence is to be found. "We see therefore in *him*," that is Paul, "that one man may do a great deal of good." There is nothing in this sentence obscure, incorrect, or ungrammatical. But ending as it does with the too colloquial phrase, "a great deal of good," it appears extremely diminutive. As it closes a paragraph, it ought, if possible, to exceed the preceding sentences in strength and elevation; whereas, in each of these respects, it falls far below them all.

In the following sentence found

upon the sixty-fourth page, we think that the adverb *vainly* is superfluous. "If the work of spreading the gospel is a privilege to christians, then none can vainly excuse themselves from it without doing themselves an injury." All the qualification, which the verb excuse here needs, would be readily understood by his readers without a qualifying term. But if a qualifying term is necessary, *vainly* does not appear to us the most suitable. The repetition of the pronoun *themselves*, in the latter clause of this sentence, is also unnecessary. *Without injury* would be not only more concise than "without doing themselves an injury;" but equally perspicuous and much more elegant.

We notice that Mr. Pond says "*influences* of the Holy Spirit," instead of *influence* of the Holy Spirit. The plural, instead of the singular, is used three times upon page seventy-seventh. Now altho' we would not undertake to prove that there is any thing unscriptural, or metaphysically incorrect, in this phraseology; yet we hesitate not to say that the use of the singular, instead of the plural, in all those places in which the word occurs in these Lectures, would be, not only more agreeable to good taste, but to the *general* usage of the best writers.

There are, in the work before us, instances in which the adverb is misplaced. It is so in the following sentence on page eighty-first. "He is a better Father in-

finitely, than any created being could be." The adverb infinitely ought to be placed immediately before the word better which it was designed to qualify, and the sentence to read thus: "He is an infinitely better Father, than any created being could be." Now we are upon this sentence, we will also take the liberty to observe, that we can see no reason why the author should say at the close of it, "*could be*," instead of *can be*, when it is obvious that he speaks in the present tense.

On page eighty-seventh, the word *awfully* appears to be improperly used. "And notwithstanding all this, prayer is greatly, *awfully* neglected." We do not think that this word, in its proper signification, expresses the real meaning of our author. He certainly did not mean to say, that prayer is *reverentially* neglected. We are not ignorant of the fact that this word is frequently used in the sense, in which our author appears to use it here; but we are confident that this use of it is not authorised either by its primitive signification, or by the *general* practice of good writers. We regret the improper use of this word the more, as it is found in a paragraph which, in other respects, is written with singular elegance and beauty.

On page 192, speaking of covetousness, as it is viewed by God. Mr. Pond says, "It is dreadfully evil in his sight." Now we suspect that many of his readers will

hesitate before they admit that any thing can, properly speaking, be *dreadful* in the sight of God. As a question of this sort may arise in their minds, and as there is nothing peculiarly pleasant in the sound of the word *dreadfully*, we think that another word, to which there can be no objection of the kind above suggested, might have been advantageously substituted in its place.

"Sanctuary enjoyments," and "mountains of sins," although they are expressions which may be tolerable, in conversation and in extempore prayers, are too trite to find a place in the language of such a writer as Mr. P. especially in discourses which are prepared for the public generally, and expected to have an extensive circulation.

We shall make but one verbal criticism more, and that shall be merely the suggestion of a query. At the close of one of the most eloquent and moving passages in his whole book, in which, to illustrate the cruelty of heathen warfare, he brings to view the sufferings of the Grecian Patriarch, the sack of Scio, and the massacre at Cyprus, he says "these events and many others of a similar character will descend on the page of history, down the annals of time, and remain an eternal monument of the cruelty, the sacrilege, and the shame of those who have promoted them." Our query is, whether it is proper to speak of *events being promoted*.

We have a few *general* remarks to make upon the Lectures before us. The author's subjects are uniformly drawn without effort from his text, and his plan of discourse is generally well suited to the accomplishment of the object which he has in view. He does not appear to discuss every subject in one uniform manner, but in a manner evidently suggested by the nature of his subject, and suited to the occasion and purpose of his discourse. There is a good degree of *originality* in these discourses, both as it respects the subjects selected, the plan of discussion, and the matter exhibited in their illustration. To a large class of readers, their contents will be in a variety of respects a *novelty*. And if they present no *new* truths to the more *intelligent* class of readers, they cannot fail to *interest* them, by the lucid and striking manner in which those with which they are already acquainted are illustrated, and the important bearing which they are shewn to have upon christian practice.—The discourse on the Millennium, and several others we intended to notice particularly; but the length to which we have already extended this review requires us to forbear. A distinguishing excellence in these discourses, is their *conciseness*. There are twenty, all upon interesting and important subjects which are clearly illustrated and faithfully applied, brought within the compass of two hundred and



sixty duodecimo pages. In this respect the author has displayed not only a talent at writing somewhat rare and peculiarly valuable, but a sound judgment in adapting means to an end, as his discourses will on this account be read by many who would otherwise neglect them. These discourses appear to be the production of a mind, not only active and vigorous, but rightly imbued with truth, and deeply impressed with a sense of its importance. They manifest throughout the lively interest of their author in the cause of missions, and his earnest desire to exert all his influence in its promotion. We have read them with great pleasure, and we hope not without profit. The more we have perused them, the more valuable in our view, they have appeared. An attentive perusal of them cannot, we think, but enlighten the minds and warm the hearts of christians, in regard to one of the most important objects of their religious concern. We should be gratified to learn, that they are in the hands of all our readers.

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ON FRETTING.

The etymology of the word *fret* is doubtful. It is used in various senses. It is sometimes used to denote a frith, or strait of the sea; where the waters, being confined, are rendered rough, and where in pressing their way through, they rub, or fret, against the shores,

and wear away the land. Any solid substance when worn away, chafed or rendered rough, is said to be fretted. Two sticks rubbed together, will fret, or produce fire. Liquors, when put into a state of fermentation, are said to be fretted. In extreme cases, the leprosy rendering the body very rough, or raising upon it protuberances, was called a fretted leprosy.

Used in a figurative, or moral sense, and applied to the mind, this word represents agitation, uneasiness, commotion of the temper; vexation of spirit; peevishness.

Fretfulness is not, properly speaking, anger; but rather a preparation of the mind for that passion. Anger is generally produced by a cause either really or imaginary great or important; fretfulness, by a cause small, or comparatively insignificant. The bite of an insect—even the buzzing of a fly will often make a man fret; while it will require a blow or the force of a hard word, to make him angry. Throw obstacles in a man's path, and you fret him: effectually stop him, and you excite his anger and provoke his resentment.

Having thus explained the word *fret*, it may be useful briefly to show,

I. The moral nature of this temper, its effects on the subjects of it and on others, and the duty and means of avoiding it.

The moral nature of fretting is

sinful. This is evident from the word of God. Fretfulness, is there expressly condemned and forbidden, particularly, in the Psalms and Proverbs.

Fretting is sinful, because it is the opposite of that patience and submission, which the precepts of the Gospel require. It proceeds from ill nature, or wrong feelings towards the objects which excite it. It implies feelings, which ought not to be exercised towards any object; especially, towards our fellow creatures. But it is above all sinful, as it is always either indirectly or directly exercised towards God. It is even exercised towards the providences of God; and sometimes, even, in view of his agency in those providences. Thus Hannah fretted against the Lord, because she was not the mother of children. The Israelites fretted, or murmured, against the Lord all the way through the wilderness. Men often fret against the weather, and the various disappointments, to which they are subjected. They often fret, because they are sick and suffer pain.

But, the sinfulness of this disposition will be further seen in the *effects* of it; both on *those*, who exercise it, and on *others*.

The effects of fretting, on *those* who exercise it are most undesirable. It destroys all their peace and renders them unhappy. It disqualifies them for social intercourse with their nearest friends, and also for communion with their

Maker. While in a fretful state of mind, they are unprepared to converse with others, to read their Bibles, or to pray. Shut out from communion with God and with their fellow creatures, men must be truly unhappy. In such forlorn solitude is every one, while fretting.

Fretting disqualifies men for pursuing any business with pleasure. It actually retards their progress; often prevents their success, or wholly defeats their purposes. It prevents the exercise of judgment and discretion. A man, in a fretful state of mind, is qualified, neither to prevent nor remove difficulties. A fretful man may form a string into a snarl; but he is the last man, who may expect to unravel it.

Besides, fretfulness not unfrequently issues in anger; or leads men to say or do that, which is very improper, and sometimes, very sinful. Hence the Psalmist says; "Fret not thyself, in any wise, to do evil."

The effects of fretting on *others* are no less undesirable. While a man is under the influence of this temper, he is a most uncomfortable companion. His company affords no pleasure to those, who have intercourse with him. It occasions nothing but pain. Sometimes they become impatient with him, and, before they are aware of it, fret themselves: and exhibit the same temper, which they have just viewed so unpleasant in him. Thus, by fretting ourselves

we often occasion others to fret. Hateful as this leprosy of the mind is, it often spreads from individual to individual, and even from family to family.

Most of all is this disposition unhappy in its consequences, when indulged by husbands and wives. Where one bosom friend is given to fretting, and daily exercises it, however patient the other companion may be, they are both alike unhappy. I say *alike unhappy*; for it is difficult to compare these two evils, aside from their moral nature; that of seeing and hearing a friend fret, and that of indulging in fretfulness ourselves. Where each companion is given to fretting, I will not say, it had been good for them had they never been born; for they may repent and reform. But I do say, unless they soon repent and reform, it had been good for them had they never been married. Happy for such companions, if they never do any thing more than fret.—Thrice happy for society, if the occasion of their fretting is that of Hannah's fretting; for, as the disposition of children is very much influenced by the examples of their parents, the children of such unhappy parents will be almost sure to possess fretful dispositions.

The duty of avoiding a fretful turn of mind, is very apparent.—It requires no argument to show, that we ought to shun every practice and avoid every disposition, which is contrary to the Scriptures; which is offensive to God:

which renders ourselves and others unhappy; which disqualifies us to serve our Maker and to promote the good of our fellow creatures; and which entails evils on our children. We ought carefully to guard against such an evil; or to lay aside so easily a besetting sin. It is just as clearly our duty to avoid fretting, as to avoid profane swearing. Each practice is a sin against God; however they may differ in turpitude. It is just as clearly our duty to avoid fretting as to be sober and temperate. But,

*In what ways shall we avoid this Sin?* Here, some undoubtedly, have a greater work to do than others; for some appear to be constitutionally of a fretful temper. Perhaps they have in some measure, inherited the disposition from their fretful parents. Some are more tried and exposed to temptation than others.

One way of avoiding the habit which we are considering is, to endeavour to keep in mind the impropriety, the unreasonableness and the unpleasantness of it. Let the fretful man often contemplate his looks and actions, when he frets, and try to listen to his own words. When a mirror is at hand let him, while fretting, go and look into it. If a sight of himself does not excite a smile; it may, as it ought, provoke a blush. He cannot be pleased to see the expressive beauty of his countenance so defaced. Let him consider, every time he finds himself inclined



to fret, how unfit he will be for business; and that, the more he frets, the more occasion he may find for fretting. Let him consider all the unhappy consequences of fretting, both as it respects himself and as it respects others; especially his near friends, his companion and children. Above all, let him keep in mind the sin of which he is guilty; that it is expressly and repeatedly forbidden in the word of God; that he cannot fret without sinning against his Maker.

Let him, also, remember, that he is in the presence of God.—Many people, much addicted to fretting in their families, will always abstain, while others are present; and thus in the estimation of those who visit them, they pass for persons of amiable dispositions. Let them see from this fact, that they *can* and *ought* to restrain themselves at all times;—and remember, that God is omnipresent; that he ever beholds their looks and hears their fretful words. Let them fear God rather than man, and consider, that he can no more justify them in fretting, than in swearing.

Let no one say the subject of these remarks is unimportant, or consider fretting a small evil. *Sin is no trifle*. Let those, who feel convicted, often look to God in their closets; there mourn over this depravity of their disposition, and devoutly implore forgiveness and grace to live patient and quiet lives; that they may be happy

themselves, render others happy, and thus glorify their father who is in heaven, in deeds of charity, words of love and looks of kindness.  
W.

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#### ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

The more common objection to revivals of Religion, is that such seasons are not clearly distinguishable from cases of strong and prevalent excitement in respect to other things. It is admitted, that individuals are often very much excited, on the subject of religion. It is admitted also, that whole parishes and districts are not unfrequently excited, in a similar way. Religious meetings are multiplied and thronged; religion assumes a new importance, and becomes the common topic of thought, of interest, and of conversation. But it is contended that such excitements are no exception from the common course of nature, and that there is no need of supposing the special agency of the Divine Spirit, in order to account for them. Very frequently, it is said, there are instances of great and general excitement, in regard to other things. A town-meeting, a law-suit, a parish quarrel, or some incident of the like nature, is capable of producing an excitement (on a different subject indeed) but as great, as general, and as lasting as any of those on religious subjects, which are dignified with the name of Revivals of Religion. Why then, it is asked, shall we suppose an effusion of the *Holy Spirit*, in seasons of excitement on religious subjects, more than in similar seasons in regard to other subjects? If natural causes are sufficient to account for existing appearances in the one case, why not in the other?

It will be the object of this paper to shew, by a recurrence to *facts* connected with revivals of religion, that this

objection to them is unfounded—that they are widely and gloriously distinguished from all other cases of strong excitement—and that there is no way of accounting for them, even on philosophical principles, but by supposing the special interposition and agency of God. What I am about to say may not apply indeed to all the seasons, which have been denominated “revivals of religion.” There have undoubtedly been *false* and *spurious* revivals—scenes of tumult and confusion, in which it would be degrading the Holy Spirit to suppose he had any direct concern. I shall speak of such revivals only, as I suppose to be genuine, and as are commonly reputed so, by orthodox ministers and Christians, at the present day. And,

1. Such revivals are distinguished from all other cases of prevalent excitement, in respect to their *origin*.—It is true, indeed, that the minds of people are not unfrequently excited and inflamed, and very generally so, on other subjects besides religion. It is true, that these excitements are to be attributed to natural causes. And it is farther true, that we can in all cases ascertain the causes, to which they are to be attributed. There is no mistaking on this point; for the circumstance or event which has caused and continues the excitement, will itself be the topic of general conversation. But in respect to most revivals of religion, no sufficient natural cause for their occurrence can be assigned. The gospel to be sure has been preached and the means of grace have been in operation as usual, but no event of special interest has occurred, and no reason can be given why they should take place when they actually do, rather than at any other time. From some invisible and unknown cause, the minds of people often are simultaneously impressed with religious considerations. Christians feel

deeply humbled and engaged, and are led to pray frequently and fervently for the prosperity of Zion; while sinners begin to be solemn and anxious, and to manifest an unusual concern for their souls. Instead of any extraordinary means being used at such times, to bring about this state of feeling; the feelings of people in most instances impel them to a more diligent use of means and to open their minds one to another, on the great subject which impresses them. It is from the fulness of their laboring hearts, that they *begin* to speak. I do not say that this is the invariable method, in which revivals of religion commence; but every day's observation testifies, that it is the frequent, if not the common method. So far are they from being dependent, for their origin, upon some great and striking external event, that the occurrence of such an event, even although a serious one, has in many instances served to interrupt their progress.

We see then, that revivals of religion are different from all other cases of prevalent excitement, in respect to their *origin*; and that in accounting for their commencement, we are necessarily led to suppose the interposition and agency of an Almighty Spirit.

2. They are distinguished from other cases of general excitement, by the nature and *depth* of those feelings, which they bring into exercise. In cases where the existing cause is an external one, the feelings excited are necessarily superficial. They are flighty, boisterous, and it may be powerful: but they have no settled and uniform character, and do not spring from the depth of the soul. But not so the feelings which are brought into exercise, in a genuine revival of religion. Whether holy or unholy, these are always of a deep and solemn kind, such as nothing merely external could produce. The most deeply hidden parts of the soul are af-

fect, and the cause is felt to be the naked influence of Him, who alone searcheth the reins and the heart.—The distressed *sinner* feels a load upon his conscience, which he cannot throw off, and can scarcely sustain. Wherever he goes, his burthen follows him; and whatever means he employs to remove it, still it remains. While the rejoicing *Christian* feels an elevation of spirit, which the world could not give, and cannot take away. Whether the feelings which are exercised in a revival of religion are right or wrong, they commonly agree in this—they do not float on the surface of the soul, the sport of conflicting circumstances and events; but have their origin and seat in the deep places of the heart. They spring from the region of the inner man, over which the external world has little direct power, and which can be touched efficiently only by the finger of God.—They are excited by the influence of an Almighty Spirit, and lost only when this influence is grieved away.

3. Revivals of religion are distinguished from other cases of strong and prevalent excitement, in *this* respect—the views and feelings produced by them are reasonable in themselves, and they lead ever to a reasonable course of conversation and pursuit. In seasons of great excitement on other subjects besides religion, the feelings of people often become very unreasonable. They are aroused and inflamed beyond all proper bounds. They fall little short, often of a species of insanity. And as the feelings of persons at such times are unreasonable in themselves, so they lead them to speak and to act unreasonably. they lead them to say and to do many things when in their sober moments they regret, and of which they are ashamed. But totally different from this are the views and feelings which are entertained, in a revival of religion. Though strongly excited,

these are perfectly *reasonable in themselves*. They are such as comport with the actual state of things. Persons at such times, view religion to be all important; and it is so. It engages their attention, and interests their feeling; and it is right it should.—They regard themselves as great sinners: and they really are such. They are distressed too and in bitterness on account of their sins; and they have reason to be. The inquiry, which their hearts most frequently suggest, is, “What shall we do to inherit eternal life?” and what more important inquiry could their hearts suggest? Frequently they are seen acquiescing sweetly in the will of God, and rejoicing in him as their friend and portion; and this certainly is their duty. They find all parts of his instituted service pleasant, and engage in it with interest, with fervor, and delight; and with what better feelings could they engage in it? The subjects of a genuine religious revival are conscious that their feelings while under its influence, are reasonable and proper; and instead of condemning themselves that they have now such feelings, they humble and condemn themselves that they have not always had the same.

And as the views and feelings of persons, at such times, are reasonable in themselves, so they prompt them to a perfectly reasonable course of *conversation and pursuit*. They prompt them to speak often one to another, and freely to converse on the great subject of religion; and on what more suitable or profitable subject could they converse? They also prompt them to be much in prayer, both in secret and in public; and in this respect, obviously they are no more than imitating and obeying their glorified Savior. Their feelings, moreover, prompt them to live as though time was short, and eternity long—as though the body was



a trifle and the soul inestimable—as though the world was fleeting and empty, and the religion of Jesus was all in all; and how could they pass away their lives in a manner more truly reasonable or laudable?

When persons look back upon their feelings and conduct, in seasons of high and strong excitement on other subjects besides that of religion, they commonly think of them with pain and regret; and it is their sincere desire that they may never be left to feel so again. But do those, who have passed through a genuine revival of religion, and been themselves the happy subjects of it—do they ever look back with sorrow and pain upon the course of conversation and conduct which they then pursued. Do they ever afterwards regret their feelings at such a time; or desire, or pray that they may feel so no more? On the contrary, do they not, in all subsequent life, remember their feelings and conduct during the revival with great satisfaction? Do they not consider the loss of such feelings as a heavy loss; and the declining from such a course of conversation and practice as a most unreasonable declension? And is it not their desire and prayer that they may be revived again and again experience the blessedness they enjoyed in the day of their espousals? This shews, that the feelings of persons, in a season of revival, will bear *looking at*, when the excitement is past—that they are highly reasonable in themselves—and that they prompt to a most reasonable and proper course of conversation and conduct. In this respect, therefore, which is a cardinal one, revivals of religion are widely distinguished from all other cases of strong and prevalent excitement.

4. They are also distinguished from other cases of this kind, by the sudden and surprising *changes* which often

take place in the feelings of persons, and especially of *opposers*, in respect to them. In seasons of excitement on other subjects, there are usually different parties; and party lines, once drawn, in most instances remained unaltered. Or if there are changes in respect to a few individuals, these changes are brought about gradually, and are easily assignable to natural causes.—But in revivals of religion, the case is often very different. Here indeed there are commonly parties—there are opposers of the work—there are those who do every thing in their power to put a stop to it, and bring it into discredit and contempt. And it not unfrequently happens, that these very persons are arrested in the height and violence of their opposition, and in the course of a few days, or hours, their feelings undergo a total change. Instead of opposing the work, they become entirely favorable to it, and deeply interested and warmly engaged for its continuance and support. They are made to feel that it is a reality, and begin with others, to weep and to beg for mercy. Their pride is humbled, and their enmity slain. Their hard hearts are broken at a stroke, and their reproachful lips begin to speak forth the praises of the living God. Thus it was with Saul of Tarsus; and thus it has been with hundreds and thousands since. God manifests in this way that the work is his own, and that there is no such thing as effectually interrupting it, in opposition to his pleasure and power.

5. It may be added, that revivals of religion are distinguished from all other cases of prevalent excitement, by the *permanency* of those impressions which they leave on the mind, and the *unalterable* change which they produce in the character. Other cases of excitement do not leave such impressions, or produce such a change. Events may

occur, in Providence, which rouse up the minds of people to a strong and general excitement. Something may take place, for instance, which calls forth a general burst of indignation. But, in this case, persons do not remain indignant forever. The storm passes over, and all is again calm. Or something may take place, which excites an universal feeling of joy. But, in this case, the tide of joy quickly ebbs, and things revert to their former state. Or something may take place, which becomes the common topic of interest and of conversation. But neither respecting this, whatever it may be, do persons think or talk forever. It soon grows stale, is dropped, and forgotten. And in none of these cases of excitement, are the characters of the persons affected essentially altered. If they were saints before, they are saints afterwards; and if they were sinners before, they are sinners still. But in a genuine revival of religion, persons receive impressions which they never lose. A change is produced in their characters which is radical and eternal. They are suddenly arrested in their career of vice, of vanity, or of worldly pursuit; their thoughts are turned almost wholly to new subjects; their feelings receive a new direction; a new aspect is given to their whole characters, and this is perpetual. It exists, not for a day, a week, a month, or a year; but in every case of genuine religious excitement, *it is perpetual*. The person affected becomes, in the strong language of scripture, "a new creature." "Old things have passed away with him, and all things have become new." He contemplates almost every object around him, with new eyes. He has new thoughts, new feelings, new motives, connexions, and attachments, new hopes and fears, sorrows and joys. What he once hated, he now loves: and what he

once loved, and delighted in, he now detests. And this new character, which he assumes, he never loses. It continues—it may be with some interruptions—but on the whole with increasing evidence, till he dies; and then it continues forever. Here then we have a *decisive* characteristic of religious revivals, and one by which they are widely and gloriously distinguished from all other cases of excitement whatever. They leave *permanent* impressions on the mind, and produce a great, and happy, and *endless* change in the character. It is this especially, which stamps revivals of religion, as the work of God.

In view of the remarks here submitted the readers of this paper will know how to estimate the opinions of those, who would place revivals of religion in the same class with cases of strong and prevalent excitement on other subjects. They will be satisfied, I think, that they cannot thus be classed, nor can they be accounted for in the same way. They are attended by several manifest and important traits, which render them as distinct from most other cases of prevalent excitement, as wisdom is from folly, or religion from sin, which indeed elevate them as far above those other excitements, as the heavens are above the earth. Such are the appearances which accompany them, that they can in no way be accounted for, but by attributing them to the special power of God.—to the special influence and agency of the Holy Spirit. These are the best reasons, therefore, why all Christians should desire them, and rejoice in them—why they should pray for them, and labor to promote them—and why they should think and speak of the frequent revivals, which are distinguishing and blessing the present age with the liveliest gratitude, and the sincerest praise.

P.

To the Editors of the *Utica Repository*.

REMEDY FOR "A SERIOUS EVIL."

Gentlemen :

Through the medium of the *Boston Recorder*, I have seen some statements respecting "a serious evil" in the Presbyterian Church. Whether the evil is confined to that church is not the question.— That it exists there, I do not doubt. That a remedy is needful will be admitted. Whether I can point out a remedy, or apply it, in any measure, I do not certainly know ; but I will do the best I can. Permit me, however, to say, that, being myself comfortably settled, not waiting for the death of Dr. —, or the removal of Mr. —, I have no personal interest, or concern, in the business. All I wish is to see ministers as useful as they can be, and congregations freely and ably supplied. As a remedy for the evil I would say,

1. *Let every minister or licentiate be constantly employed.* To this all agree. But how can it be effected? It is the easiest thing in the world. Never go to a place without being invited.— But what if I am invited to none? Then take your axe, or your flail ; as fully satisfied that you have mistaken your calling. For if you are truly called by your master to preach the gospel, he will find a place for you, without your transgressing a single rule of decorum. Go to the first place you are invited to, and continue in that place doing all you can for Christ, for the church, and for the souls of men, till you are fully satisfied it is your duty to go to another place. But at any rate, be always employed, whether you receive any compensation or not. For just as certainly as you are called to preach the gospel, you may find a place to preach it, and support while you are preaching it.

2. *Let feeble congregations be aided by such as are able.* I do not believe, gentlemen, that the evil, of which "Observer" very justly complains, is altogether with ministers. I believe that our Presbyteries and able congregations must bear a part. It was an ancient rule, that "the strong should bear the infirmities of the weak;" and Paul says to the Corinthians, "I would not that other men be eased, and you burdened, but that there should be equality." As a minister should be willing to preach the gospel to the poor, to ride in the woods, to settle any where, and do all the good he can ; so should his brethren in the cities, and villages, and able congregations, sympathize with him ; put out something of their abundance to aid and encourage him, and also excite the rich and the liberal, and the pious members of their congregations, to aid the patient and laborious minister among the poor. This is the genuine spirit of domestic missions. I see no reason, gentlemen, why my brother should go and spend all his time and talents and strength among the poor rather than myself, unless it be this, that he is better qualified for that work, and I for another. This is a good reason.— If it be so, I see no reason why he should bear the burden alone, when I am able to help him. Is there any? Should love to Christ and to the church, and to the souls of men, move him to this service? Why should not the same love move me? Should he be willing to preach the gospel to the poor, because of this love shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost? Why should not a hundred christians, who are able, be made acquainted with his love and zeal, and aid him too? Where is the principle of reason, or of equity ;



of equality, or of law; of the gospel, or implied in the example of Paul, or even of Christ, which ought to influence such a minister and not myself, and every other man in the community? Is it right, gentlemen, "that other men be eased and you burdened?"—Would "Observer" himself think, that a minister who has a family, or who intends to have, ought to sacrifice, out of his own earnings, One Hundred Dollars every year, and live as he can, and do as much work of the ministry as he can, while One Hundred members of able churches are exempted from the payment of one dollar each, though each of them could pay One Hundred with as much ease as the minister? Is it the spirit of the gospel, which can look on and see others labor, and make sacrifices, and deny themselves, and suffer for Christ and for souls, while we can do and suffer nothing? It is a very fine subject for charitable talk to many ministers and professors—they can tell how much the missionary should be willing to suffer in this glorious cause, and blame him, if he whisper his complaints—but can there be an instance of greater self-ignorance? Do these ministers and professors remember that they are bought with the blood of Christ, or have they forgotten their obligations, and do they think themselves at liberty to labor for themselves and their families only, while their brethren must take up the common cross of christians, and bear the whole weight of it without a groan or a sigh, and without so much as casting a look for aid to the habitations of such as dwell at ease?

I find, Messrs. Editors, that my indignation against such inconsideration, (I had almost said,

hypocrisy,) begins to rise, and I leave the subject at your disposal

Yours,

EQUALITY.

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### ANECDOTE.

THE FOLLOWING ANECDOTE IS RELATED OF THE FAMOUS DR. MANTON.

"Being appointed to preach before the Lord Mayor, the court of aldermen and the companies of the city, the Doctor chose a subject, in which he had an opportunity of displaying his judgment and learning. He was heard with admiration and applause by the more intelligent part of the audience. But as he was returning with the Lord Mayor, a poor man followed him, pulled him by the sleeve of his gown, and asked him if he were the gentleman that preached before the Lord Mayor. He answered, he was. "Sir," says he, "I came with hopes of getting some good to my soul, but I was greatly disappointed, for I could not understand a great deal of what you said; you were quite above me." The Doctor replied with tears; "Friend, if I did not give you a sermon, you have given me one; and by the grace of God I will never play the fool to preach before my Lord Mayor in such a manner again."

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### TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A "Review" from an anonymous Writer merits attention. W. must be deferred for want of room.

F. C. F. Tennet, and Antipes have been received.





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☞ Mr. Amos H. Haskell, Chambers No. 90, Wash- ington-street, will in future be the Agent for this work, in the city of Boston, where subscribers will please call for their numbers.